DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 432 399 PS 027 803

TITLE	A Guide to Successful Public-Private Partnerships for Child Care. The Child Care Partnership Project.
INSTITUTION	Finance Project, Washington, DC.
SPONS AGENCY	Administration on Children, Youth, and Families (DHHS), Washington, DC. Child Care Bureau.
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	28p.; For other Child Care Partnership Project reports, see PS 027 802-805.
AVAILABLE FROM	National Child Care Information Center, 301 Maple Avenue West, Suite 602, Vienna, VA 22180; Tel: 800-616-2242 (Toll Free); Web site: http://nccic.org/ccpartnerships
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Day Care; Early Childhood Education; *Partnerships in Education; Program Design; Program Development; Program Implementation; Resource Materials
IDENTIFIERS	Child Care Partnership Project; Program Characteristics; *Public Private Partnership Programs

ABSTRACT

This guide was developed as part of the Child Care Partnership Project, a multi-year technical assistance effort. The Partnership Project provides a series of technical assistance resources and materials to support the development and strengthening of public-private partnerships to improve the quality and supply of child care. The guide is designed to provide practical information on creating and maintaining public-private child care partnerships, and draws from the experiences and wisdom of successful partnership leaders at the national, state, and local levels. The guide begins with a definition of public-private partnerships, followed by a summary of why they are created and what public-private partnerships can do. The guide then presents a set of principles and strategies for establishing and maintaining successful partnerships based on lessons from successful national, state, and local models. The guide asserts that successful partnerships: (1) have clear goals; (2) aim to achieve positive results and regularly measure their progress; (3) involve families and include them when developing programs and services; (4) are broad-based and include key stakeholders from the beginning; (5) involve powerful champions and make their initiatives visible to the public; (6) establish clear governance structures that define partner roles and responsibilities; (7) set and adhere to a set of ground rules that guide the partnership in its work; (8) are flexible, adopt an entrepreneurial mindset, and adapt to changing conditions and resources; (9) enable all partners to benefit by drawing on their strengths and contributions; and (10) work to maintain momentum and to sustain their work over time. (EV)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

The Child Care Partnership Project

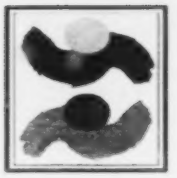
A Guide to Successful Public-Private Partnerships for Child Care

ED 432 399

PS 027803

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Child Care Bureau

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



The Child Care Partnership Project

The Child Care Partnership Project is a multi-year technical assistance effort provided by the following organizations.

- The Finance Project
  Washington, D.C.

- Families and Work Institute
  New York, New York

- National Governors' Association Center for Best Practices
  Washington, D.C.

It is funded by the Child Care Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The Child Care Partnership Project provides resources and materials to support the development and strengthening of public-private partnerships for child care.

Contents

Introduction 1

What is a Public-Private Partnership? 3

Why Public-Private Child Care Partnerships are Created 5

What Public-Private Partnerships Do 7

Principles for Successful Public-Private Partnerships 11

Strategies for Creating and Sustaining Partnerships 17

The Child Care Partnership Project 25

Introduction

During the past decade, rapidly changing political and economic forces have created an environment in which many public- and private-sector leaders have discovered a strong mutual interest in exploring new ways to form and sustain partnerships. As many states and communities are learning, partnerships can effectively bring together a wide range of contributors, including governments, businesses, philanthropies, families, and service providers, to expand and improve child care and other services for children and families.

"We've brought the issue of child care into the spotlight and turned private conversations families have into a national debate we all must have."

—Donna Shalala, Secretary of Health and Human Services

This guide is designed to provide practical information on creating and maintaining public-private child care partnerships to increase and improve child care in states and communities throughout the country. It draws from the experiences and wisdom of successful partnership leaders at the national, state, and local levels to provide resources for existing and future partnerships.

This guide begins with a definition of public-private partnerships, followed by a summary of why they are created and what public-private partnerships can do. The guide then presents a set of principles and strategies for establishing and maintaining successful partnerships based on lessons from successful national, state, and local models.

What is a Public-Private Partnership?

A public-private partnership exists when the public sector (federal, tribal, state, and/or local officials and agencies) joins with the private sector (employers, philanthropies, media, civic groups, families, and service providers) in pursuit of a common goal. In the case of public-private partnerships for child care, partnerships typically focus on new ways to expand and improve the capacity of a state or locality to meet the needs of young children and their families.

Although each public-private partnership is unique in its membership and structure, all share the following characteristics.

- They bring together representatives from the public sector who derive their authority from federal, state, or local governmental entities; and representatives from the private sector (e.g., business, philanthropy, parents, community organizations) around shared goals.
- Each partner contributes time, money, expertise, or other resources to the partnership.
- Partners work together toward common goals or objectives.
- Decision-making and management responsibilities are shared among the partners.

While these four criteria are essential for public-private partnerships, the structure, organization, and goals of such partnerships vary widely. For instance, while each partner contributes resources, the types and amounts will vary according to ability. Likewise, the extent of shared decision-making might depend on the resources and constraints of various partners, such as legal responsibility for oversight of public funds, fundraising capability, technical expertise, potential conflicts of interest, and other considerations.

The next section provides information on why public-private partnerships are created. Understanding the motivation of partners is essential in order to translate the concept of public-private partnerships into action.

Why Public-Private Child Care Partnerships are Created

Public-private partnerships are an increasingly viable and popular strategy for improving supports and services in many areas, including child care. They are formed for a variety of reasons, including the reality that no one sector or group can effectively address the need for quality child care services. In order to understand how and why partnerships are able to effectively mobilize public and private resources to increase and improve child care, it is critical to recognize that each prospective partner has a unique set of reasons for participating. Typical motivations of various partners include the following:

- **Families** continue to need and seek affordable child care that enhances child development, school readiness, and well-being. Families also need and seek education and care in a variety of settings that reflect diverse family and community cultures, languages, values, and work schedules.
- **Government** is providing child care assistance to working parents through the tax code and subsidies to low-income families. Government is looking to the private sector for leadership, technical expertise, and innovative ways to finance vital community services, because of growing pressure to find new and better ways of doing business. Government also looks to private-sector initiatives and leadership to endure and provide continuity as elected and appointed public-sector leaders change.
- **Employers** are recognizing the benefits of addressing the work-life needs of their employees in order to attract and retain qualified workers and to enhance their productivity. Employers also understand that their future financial well-being depends on the economic viability of their communities and that quality child care is an essential ingredient to a healthy economic climate. Although many employers are enthusiastic

"The bottom line is that our efforts to support employees' work-family priorities are good business. These are neither 'perks' nor 'giveaways.' These tools will help us attract, motivate, and retain people who are more likely to be more dedicated, more focused, more innovative, and more productive."

—Randall L. Tobias, Chairman of Eli Lilly and Company

"Today more than ever, businesses are coming to recognize that child care is a core economic issue."

—Robert Rubin, Secretary of the Treasury

partners in efforts to create and improve child care, their resources are limited and they, too, seek the benefit of sharing costs with other employers and public-sector partners.

- **Philanthropies** are seeking to leverage their investments to foster systemic change to improve the way that states and communities address the needs of children and their families. New information about the importance of early childhood brain development has also caused some philanthropies to invest in initiatives that support the healthy development of young children, including increasing and improving child care. Other philanthropies are investing in child care as economic development or poverty alleviation strategies.

"How individuals function from the preschool years all the way through adolescence and even adulthood, to a significant extent, hinges on their experiences before the age of 3."

—Starting Points, Carnegie Corporation of New York

- **Educators, child care providers, and health and human service professionals** are seeking support from both the public and private sectors to increase and improve community-based child care, and to meet the health, housing, employment, or other needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged children and families. They are also interested in finding ways to share knowledge and resources that help them improve the quality of the services they provide.
- **Community and civic organizations** seek similar positive results in delivering effective, efficient services to young children and their families. Increasingly, they understand that investing in quality child care is an important strategy for: attracting and retaining businesses; preparing children for a productive future in school and work; reducing future dependence on public assistance; and reducing crime.
- **Unions** seek quality child care for their members' children and for all young children and their families. Unions are also concerned with promoting a state's or community's economic vitality, and they consider community resources such as child care essential to their members' ability to work.

The most successful partnerships understand and accommodate these motivations and shape partnership goals and activities to benefit all of the partners.

What Public-Private Partnerships Do

Across the country, innovative efforts are under way to form productive public-private partnerships to improve child care. While these partnerships share the overarching goal of improving child care, they have been created for the more specific goals of:

- increasing the quality of child care;
- increasing the supply of high-quality child care;
- providing technical assistance to employers on work-life issues, including child care;
- raising revenue; and
- building and improving state and community child care systems.

While each partnership is unique, many are employing some of the following innovative approaches to meet these goals.

"If the public and private sectors join forces, I am confident that we can find solutions to problems like poor training or inadequate child care providers, the quality of child care facilities, and even the matter of low pay for care givers."

—Richard Riley, Secretary of Education

Increasing the quality of child care

Many partnerships have focused on improving child care by encouraging and rewarding the professional development of providers and improving the facilities where children spend time. Public-private partnerships are improving the quality of care by:

- recruiting, training, and licensing both center and home-based providers;
- developing early-childhood professional-development systems and career paths;
- increasing provider compensation based on qualifications;
- helping programs become accredited;

- establishing peer-mentoring programs for child care providers;
- creating programs designed specifically for school-aged children;
- constructing and renovating child care facilities; and
- educating parents and families to be careful consumers.

Increasing the availability of high-quality child care

In many communities, a shortage of quality child care puts parents in the untenable position of leaving their children in care that is inadequate or of losing their jobs. To alleviate this situation, public-private partnerships are employing the following approaches:

- reaching out to school districts, youth development and community organizations, parks and recreation departments, and employers in order to create or expand school-age child care;
- establishing loan funds to expand or upgrade facilities;
- recruiting providers for non-traditional hours and emergency care;
- regularly surveying and reporting on the quality of state or community child care services; and
- working with housing authorities, economic development organizations, zoning commissions, employers, and developers to include child care facilities in construction projects.

Providing technical assistance to employers

As more and more employers realize that helping families find and afford quality child care positively affects their bottom line, they are looking for partners to help develop new programs and policies. Public-private partnerships are assisting employers by:

- linking businesses with child care resource and referral organizations that can offer both expertise and data to help employers create appropriate child care options for their employees;
- conducting surveys on employee child care needs;

- developing resources and "toolkits" for employers seeking to create or enhance family-supportive work-life policies and programs such as child care;
- conducting public awareness campaigns; and
- recognizing and rewarding employers and employees who support child care in their workplaces and/or communities.

Raising revenue

Meeting the growing demand for high-quality programs requires additional resources from both the public and private sectors. Public-private partnerships are raising revenue through the use of:

- legislative mandates that create funding streams for child care or a broader package of children's services;
- traditional fundraising techniques that create sources of revenues to improve the quality, access, or affordability of child care; and
- tax credits, user fees, and other incentives that generate revenues dedicated to a specific purpose such as child care.

Building and improving the state and community child care infrastructure

Public-private partnerships are creating an ongoing system that supports improved child care and other support services for children and families by:

- linking the creation, expansion, and improvement of child care quality to state or community economic development initiatives;
- establishing or participating in community coalitions, commissions, or task forces that address child care;
- coordinating financial resources that support child care;
- coordinating community services, such as health, family literacy, and family support services with child care;
- organizing business commissions, roundtables, and blue-ribbon committees to create financing strategies for increasing and improving child care;

- brokering technical assistance to child care providers and child care partnerships in areas such as personnel management, public relations, financing, or strategic planning;
- providing funding or in-kind support to early childhood system development efforts, such as establishing child care, expansion, improvement, facility, or subsidy funds and securing donated goods or pro-bono financial, legal, or media services; and
- lobbying for public support to increase and improve child care.

Successful partnerships often employ more than one of these approaches to achieve their goals.

Principles for Successful Public-Private Partnerships

While each partnership is unique in its membership, goals, and approaches, the experiences of existing partnerships and their public- and private-sector leaders (government officials, business executives, philanthropic leaders, and others) point to some key principles for success. These ten principles provide a useful framework for establishing successful public-private partnerships, and the next chapter provides strategies for achieving these principles. Selected examples are listed with the principles to connect the principles to practice.

Principle 1: Successful partnerships have clear goals.

Successful partnerships engage in a thoughtful process to define a vision or mission and clear goals. They also take the time that is needed to ensure complete agreement and understanding among all the partners. The objective is to obtain consensus, not compromise, so that all partners are enthusiastic about the work that lies ahead. Collectively defining the goals gives all partners ownership of the partnership. This increases the likelihood that they will stay commited over the long run.

Consensus around goals serves as both the glue that holds a partnership together and as a rudder that directs its actions. If all of the partners are committed to the same goals, then they are better equipped to negotiate the inevitable differences of perspective and opinion that arise as they work together. Likewise, if the goals are held firm, the partnership can be flexible in *how* they are accomplished. Flexibility is essential to accommodate political, economic, leadership, or other changes, and clear goals help guide the partnership as it evolves over time.

Principle 2: Successful partnerships aim to achieve positive results and regularly measure their progress.

The state of Vermont publishes "Social Well-Being of Vermonters" every year, reporting on 40 indicators of children's well-being. This report has helped mobilize communities to act and to document their success toward stated targets.

Defining and achieving specific outcomes or results—a criterion of success that the business sector has long held as important and that the public sector is striving to embrace—is an effective way to assess progress. Successful partnerships select indicators and performance measures to monitor whether their efforts are productive and funds are well spent. Measuring progress toward goals establishes accountability in both the public and the private sectors to show that limited resources are being used effectively. This bottom-line orientation to results is particularly effective in managing a partnership with shared authority and multiple interests.

As a management tool, the process of regularly measuring progress and results can provide partnerships with critical information about what is working, what is not, and what changes can help accomplish the partnership's goals. Stakeholder groups then create strategies to address each indicator, and public and private funders can tie allocations to actual results.

Principle 3: Successful partnerships involve families and include them when developing programs and services.

In some North Carolina Smart Start counties, family members are hired to survey the early childhood service needs and preferences of their peers through interviews, home visits, and focus groups. The findings are then used to guide the design of the county's annual Smart Start plan.

Families are the ultimate consumers of the programs and services supported by public-private child care partnerships. Partnerships are more likely to establish programs and services that achieve their purpose when families are involved in both the planning and evaluation of programs and services. Consumer involvement can also ensure that programs and services developed by a partnership are culturally and linguistically appropriate for the populations being served.

Engaging families means more than giving them a seat at the table. It means giving them the information and tools that they need to be equal partners. State and local initiatives such as Boston's Parents United for Child Care, California's Parent Voices, and Connecticut's Parent

Leadership Training Institutes train and support parents so they can make their voices heard in initiatives designed to meet their needs.

Principle 4: Successful partnerships are broad-based and include key stakeholders from the beginning.

Partnerships are most effective when they are able to draw from a broad range of perspectives, resources, and expertise. By involving diverse stakeholders—such as law enforcement and faith community leaders, pediatricians, or senior citizens—partnerships can gain broader public and private support for their efforts through the constituencies that each partner represents and supports.

The North Dakota Infant/Toddler Enrichment Program actively pursued tribal nations as partners, because they knew that the tribal perspective was essential to achieve the goal of improving the quality of care for infants and toddlers in North Dakota.

Successful partnerships must work to engage business, community groups, parents, providers, and other stakeholders from the start. When members join the partnership late, they miss out on the process of establishing the partnership's vision and goals and the relationships that result from such shared work. While it is difficult to know who all the stakeholders will be in advance, taking the time to engage as many as possible early on will save time in the long run.

Principle 5: Successful partnerships involve powerful champions and make their initiatives visible to the public.

Success requires leaders who act as change agents by clearly communicating the goals of the partnership and building a broad base of support. Governors and other elected officials, business, law enforcement, health, education, religious, and philanthropic leaders have all been effective champions by using their bully pulpits to promote consensus on partnership goals and to build political will to support or expand successful partnership efforts. Families are also effective champions when they mobilize and speak with a unified voice.

In San Francisco, the Mayor's Office, the Miriam and Peter Haas Fund, and Providian Bank are all acting as champions to establish and sustain a child care facilities loan fund.

Champions bring visibility to the partnership by obtaining media attention through public service announcements, press conferences, letters to the editor, and opinion pieces. They can also share information at public events, such as

hearings, town meetings, and meetings of related groups or organizations (such as local business chambers). Prominent organizations, such as charitable foundations, community service groups, and economic development or planning organizations, also can be respected leaders.

Principle 6: Successful partnerships establish clear governance structures that define partner roles and responsibilities.

The Michigan Futures Project used the existing statewide network of child care resource and referral agencies as a structure for improving provider recruitment and training.

Establishing an effective governance structure is essential for the successful management of the partnership. Some partnerships build on existing governance structures that are respected in the community to avoid creating organizational duplication. Other partnerships create new non-profit entities or establish temporary blue-ribbon committees, commissions, or advisory boards to guide their work.

Newark's Babyland partnership was created as a new entity, because no other organization existed that could accomplish its broad child and economic development goals.

Effective governance structures define the various roles that partners will play and ensure that all partners understand and accept these roles. Many partnerships create written plans that include the roles and responsibilities of each partner, or use written contracts or memoranda of understanding to define roles. The process of defining partner roles and responsibilities usually occurs after the partnership creates a shared mission and articulates its goals. Once partners embrace a shared mission, they are more likely to see ways that they can effectively contribute to the partnership's success. Partners are also more likely to remain actively involved in the partnership when they see their role as valuable.

Principle 7: Successful partnerships set and adhere to a set of ground rules that guide the partnership in its work.

Many partnerships adopt formal procedures such as Roberts' Rules of Order. Then, when the partnership reaches a roadblock, they have a way to move the process forward.

Because partnerships involve diverse individuals and organizations working together toward shared goals, partners must agree on how they will work together. Ground rules might include how the partners will define and measure success, conduct meetings, communicate with each other, share information, and make decisions. Such mutually agreed-upon guidelines can prevent miscommunication and establish a process in which all

partners participate effectively and are respected for their unique contributions. They also provide a mechanism to resolve inevitable differences of opinion.

Principle 8: Successful partnerships are flexible, adopt an entrepreneurial mindset, and adapt to changing conditions and resources.

Because existing public and private support for child care is inadequate to meet the demand, partnerships must be flexible enough to take advantage of changing conditions and resources. This entrepreneurial mindset might involve adapting a partnership's scope to take advantage of new state or federal funding; creating or developing services in response to a foundation's specific guidelines; or serving a particular population (such as welfare-to-work clients) that is important to public policymakers. Likewise, entrepreneurial thinking can lead a partnership to leverage new resources. Successful partnership leaders consistently credit their success to serendipity or the convergence of several complementary opportunities. Yet, such opportunities can only lead to success when leaders are able to recognize and take advantage of them.

When the Success by Six leaders of the United Way of Massachusetts Bay recognized the need to improve the quality of child care in Boston, they led a successful lobbying effort to create a new commemorative license plate that generates additional funding dedicated to this goal.

Principle 9: Successful partnerships enable all partners to benefit by drawing on their strengths and contributions.

Each partner operates in a unique environment, bringing different strengths, knowledge, and resources to the mix. Successful partnerships draw on the strengths of the individual members, while remaining sensitive to the different corporate, government, or community "cultures" from which the members come. For example, most business leaders operate in an environment that requires rapid decisions and quick action. Public-sector partners often work in environments that require more lengthy agency or legislative approval processes. Community and civic groups often prefer inclusive, consensus-building processes that are also time-consuming.

Successful partners play to the strengths of the various partners. Private-sector partners, for instance, may be well-positioned to lead or convene efforts requiring quick action,

such as generating financing commitments or lobbying. Public-sector partners may complement these activities by providing information, convening meetings, and revamping or establishing rules that support the goals of the partnership. Community groups can be tapped to lead visioning and goal setting processes that require consensus among all partners.

In Colorado, the Governor appointed a Business Commission on Child Care Financing to mobilize high-level business leaders to develop and successfully lobby for long-range early childhood funding, an activity that would have been difficult for government to carry out alone.

Whatever the role, all partners must feel that they benefit from participating in the partnership. When all partners perceive that they have something to gain through a partnership, they remain actively involved, even though each partner's perceived gain may be different. Yet, achieving harmony in a partnership that includes diverse cultures takes work. Successful partnership leaders stress that it is essential to take the time both to create common language and understanding, and to create a culture that values diverse talent, ideas, and perspectives. The most successful partnerships make room for new partners to come to the table, even if they do not have a background in child care or early childhood education. These partnerships create effective ways to educate members about the partnership's challenges, mission, and goals, and to use partners' different perspectives, talents, and resources to find new solutions to old problems.

Principle 10: Successful partnerships work to maintain momentum and to sustain their work over time.

The most successful partnerships take time to plan how they will maintain momentum and sustain their efforts from the beginning. Many celebrate even the small successes and generate media attention whenever possible. Others structure activities so that partners gain a sense of accomplishment from completing interim tasks, even though the partnership's vision and goals may take many years to accomplish. It is also important to plan for financial sustainability and to recognize that dedicated staff may be needed to support the partnership both initially and over time.

Strategies for Creating and Sustaining Partnerships

Successfully convening or establishing a public-private partnership is a complex, challenging, and time-consuming task. Both the public and private sectors must be involved, and all partners must play significant roles for the partnership to succeed. While public or private entities cannot create public-private partnerships by themselves, *all* entities can take steps to encourage, create, or sustain child care partnerships using some or all of the following strategies.

This section provides a variety of strategies that can be used by newly formed and well-established partnerships. They support one or more of the principles outlined in the previous section, as illustrated in the side bars.

Serve as a catalyst.

Supports Principle 5: *involve powerful champions who make the initiative visible to the public.*

Both the public and private sectors can be catalysts for establishing partnerships, among and within sectors. One way is to convene forums that raise important issues and attract potential partners. For example, the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration helps organize an annual symposium designed to foster the leadership of private-sector employers on child care issues and to build child care capacity and improve quality. Many public and private state and community groups have held forums on early-childhood brain development to engage new and diverse partners in improving supports and services for young children and their families. The public, private, and philanthropic sectors can also act individually or collectively as catalysts by convening potential partners, providing information, or offering incentives such as small grants, matching funds, or tax breaks for private-sector partners.

Identify and recruit partners.

One of the most important roles that leaders in all sectors can play is to recruit additional partners. Here, the motto is simple: it is always easier to preach to the converted. Robert Wehling, Senior Vice President, Procter & Gamble, offers the following suggestion: "You have higher odds if you find someone who's already leaning your way and get them to do more. Don't enlist anyone from business to help unless they are personally and genuinely enthusiastic about being involved. They must be willing to take the personal time to truly understand the problems and issues you are dealing with." This advice holds true for approaching prospective partners in any sector. The methods outlined below rely on a strategic approach for seeking out new partners.

Supports Principle 4: draw from a broad base of stakeholders from the beginning.

Target partners who are most likely to participate.
The most direct method for recruiting partners is to identify public- or private-sector leaders in the state or community who are already interested in child care or related issues. These leaders may be concerned with the needs of their own organizations, their employees' needs, funding mandates, organizational missions, public visibility, or the larger communities where they live and work.

Rely on personal contacts when approaching potential partners.
Investing the time to make a personal contact and having that first contact made by someone who knows the prospective partner can ease potential partners into a relationship. "It's a one-person-reaches-one-person thing," says Dee Topol, former president of the Travelers Foundation. A business colleague, a respected elected official, or a community leader may be the best person to make a first contact. Once on board, new champions can promote initiatives and recruit their peers.

Supports Principle 9: enable all partners to benefit by drawing on their strengths and contributions.

Underscore the benefits of involvement.
Prospective partners are more likely to get involved when their own needs will be served. When approaching new partners, be prepared to describe how each partner can benefit from the partnership. For example, employers seeking to attract and retain a qualified workforce during a period of low unemployment may view an investment in child care as a strategy to enhance their productivity and

economic competitiveness. State agencies seeking to place former welfare recipients in jobs may be willing to fund child care expansion and quality improvements. Chambers of commerce, economic development entities, or local governments may see child care as a strategy for attracting new businesses and creating a vigorous economic climate. Partnership is also an effective approach for small- and medium-sized businesses. These enterprises have limited resources, but can benefit from the economies of scale that partnerships can offer. Likewise, non-profit and community organizations may find information about the critical relationship between early-childhood brain development and future education and workforce success a compelling argument for engaging businesses in partnerships to increase and improve child care.

Expand the list of stakeholders.

Traditional child care advocates are critical partners, but it is important to seek out and cultivate the leadership of key constituencies that reflect or influence the range of people and institutions that need to be sold on investments in child care. These may include (but are not limited to) parents; tribal, state, county, and local government; legislators and their staff; the media; local advocates; law enforcement; faith communities; pediatricians; senior citizens; community residents; and, of course, the business community. The broader a constituency of the partnership, the broader its appeal will be.

Supports Principle 3: *involve families and include them when developing programs and services.*

Help design the partnership's structure and guide its activities.

Many Governors, including those in Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Ohio, North Carolina, and Vermont, have created initiatives that support community-based partnerships that involve both the public and private sectors. Government and philanthropic partners often set funding guidelines that shape a partnership's organizational structure and policy development. Private-sector initiatives have also provided organizational structure and guidance to successful programs. The Beacon Initiative, for example, provides organizational support to 40 school-based Beacon Centers in New York City that includes structural and policy direction for creating effective systems of programs and services for young children and their families.

Supports Principle 6: *establish a clear governance structure that defines partner roles and responsibilities.*

Assign meaningful tasks.

Partnerships often fall apart when members perceive their role to be meaningless. Once partners are committed to the goals of the partnership, it is essential to keep them engaged in a meaningful capacity. Active participation goes beyond attending meetings. "You can't just engage people in the issue, tell them to come to a meeting, and then—three months later—tell them to come back to another meeting," says Dee Topol. By asking all partners to assume significant roles, such as solving financing challenges or influencing policymakers, partners can make invaluable contributions and feel that the time and energy they invest in the partnership is worthwhile. This will also make them want to stay involved.

Take time to plan and set a manageable agenda.

Supports Principle 1: have clear goals.

Creating a shared vision or mission, goals, and strategies that all partners understand and support is a time-consuming process. Successful partnership leaders in all sectors and at the national, state, and local levels stress that developing true partnerships and results takes an enormous amount of time. It is important to be patient during this process and to remember that allowing for a collaborative planning process ultimately results in broader and more secure support from partners and the public. At the same time, it is important to create steps in this process that lead to early successes. By starting small and doing a few things well, partnerships can build credibility and a reputation that attracts additional partners and support for their efforts. The San Francisco Facilities Fund started with a few grants that demonstrated results and fueled momentum.

Keep expectations clear.

Clear goals and expectations are important when creating, expanding, or sustaining a partnership. Business, government, and community leaders must always be clear about ongoing tasks, responsibilities, and expected results. One way to do this is to agree to a timetable. Procter & Gamble's Robert Wehling says, "Business people . . . move faster than a lot of the public agencies. . . . But both sides need to listen to each other. The business people need to understand why speed may not be in the best interest of the

outcome we seek. By the same token, those used to operating at a slower pace may need to find ways to speed up efforts."

Build the capacity of partners to work together.

The early phase of partnership development requires opportunities for partners to get to know each other. Discovering and building on the mutual interests of partners generates enthusiasm based on mutual interest, rather than creating frustration that arises from compromise. Once partnerships are organized, regular opportunities for partners to work together help develop these relationships. A retreat or series of meetings that brings partners together to develop and apply a common language and a common set of expectations is one way to create bonds. For example, leaders of Hawaii's Early Childhood Education and Care Finance Think Tank organized visits to child care programs for this purpose. Armed with a written observation guide and accompanied by early childhood experts, business leaders and elected officials were able to see the current situation and relevant issues firsthand, and they became familiar with the vocabulary that early childhood professionals use. They also had an opportunity to work side by side, enhancing interpersonal relationships.

It is also important for partners to have time to meet in person, as well as over the phone, and to create the positive relationships that so many successful partnership leaders consider essential.

Keep partners informed.

Supports Principle 7: set and adhere to a set of ground rules that guide the partnership in its work.

Partnerships can fail when partners do not regularly receive the information and support that they must have to make informed decisions. Partners need accurate and concise background material well in advance of meetings or other activities. Busy people are unlikely to read long, dense policy analyses, and all partners benefit when materials are clear and succinct. Partners also need periodic updates on the progress of the partnership. Phone conversations, e-mail, or written correspondence to partners let them know about partnership progress, results, and challenges, as well

as when their help is needed. Partners are more likely to stay involved when they know what is going on.

Disseminate briefing or issue papers.

Many states, localities, employers, and private-sector community organizations, such as the United Way, League of Women Voters, or professional organizations, use brief issue papers to target their messages to stakeholders. These short reports can focus attention on the need to improve child care and what various community members can do to help. The West Virginia Governor's Office, for instance, used this strategy to bring attention to an education initiative and to make the case for its urgency. These papers successfully drew a broader circle of stakeholders into further discussion about options for change.

Provide information on best practices and replicable models.

Supports Principle 8: be flexible, adopt an entrepreneurial mindset, and adapt to changing conditions and resources.

Providing information about practices or models that have been successful in other places can help establish a partnership or move one forward in several ways. First, it brings new ideas and approaches to the table. Second, it helps partners buy into the concept of public-private partnerships by highlighting success stories. It can also inspire partnerships to embrace new ideas or approaches that contribute to the partnership's success and vitality. This, in turn, can help to maintain a partnership's momentum. And, finally, identifying successful models leads to a network of peers to call on for support and assistance as partnerships evolve. Both public and private partners have many opportunities to share information about promising practices. At a 1997 National Governors' Association meeting, for instance, Governors from across the country showcased and discussed promising early childhood initiatives. In 1998, Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin convened a group of CEOs to learn more about how businesses can support child care and other family-friendly policies.

Profiles of model public-private partnerships for child care are available through the National Child Care Information Center (www.nccic.org/ccpartnerships or 1-800/616-2242).

Align public- and private-sector practices.

Government can work to decentralize decision-making and establish results-based accountability systems to better align public- and private-sector practices and to be more "user-friendly" to private-sector partners. Private-sector leaders can help identify policies and practices that are barriers to expanding and improving child care. For example, the state of Ohio declared counties participating in Ohio Family and Children First to be "regulation-free zones." Ohio Family and Children First councils were asked to identify rules and regulations that posed obstacles to system reform and collaboration. State officials were then directed to change or renegotiate these rules and regulations. Public- and private-sector leaders can also learn more about how and when each can act, and can create goals and strategies that build on the strengths of all partners.

Identify indicators and measure progress.

The continued success of public-private child care partnerships ultimately depends on being able to demonstrate positive results over time. Partners must find ways to show continued progress toward goals in all phases of their work. Ideally, goals should be set and performance measures should be used to track the success and promote the value of public-private partnerships. In reality, change takes time, and partnerships need to find ways to show successes—even small ones—that result in positive change. Sure signs of progress help to keep partners enthusiastic and to engage the general public.

Supports Principle 2: *aim to achieve results and regularly measure progress.*

Successful partnerships regularly collect data to measure progress toward their shared goals. Both process and program evaluations are important tools for tracking partnership successes. To inform the actions and effectiveness of a partnership, business and government leaders, advocates, or the partnership itself can begin this process by establishing indicators and collecting and analyzing data about child well-being and services for children.

Give partners credit and recognition.

Supports Principle 10: *work to maintain momentum and sustain progress.*

A partnership will benefit from recognizing the efforts of its members. Opportunities that build goodwill through public recognition can help keep partnerships strong. Opportunities to generate media attention for partnerships and celebrate big and small successes are valuable. Some partnerships choose to share the collective credit for success, while others allow partners to take ownership of specific projects. For example, the "I Am Your Child" campaign to raise public awareness about the importance of early childhood development allowed businesses and public agencies to "brand" materials and gain public attention for their support. However, all partners must be comfortable with whatever strategy for publicizing the partnership is being employed.

The Child Care Partnership Project

This guide is a product of the Child Care Partnership Project, a multi-year technical assistance effort funded by the Child Care Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Partnership Project is providing a series of technical assistance resources and materials to support the development and strengthening of public-private partnerships to improve the quality and supply of child care.

All of the materials produced under the Child Care Partnership Project will be available through the National Child Care Information Center at

http://nccic.org/ccpartnerships

or 1-800-616-2242.

For more information on the project, please contact

The Finance Project

202-628-4200.